

A message to Women

FROM THE GOVERNORS OF TWELVE STATES

Calling Women to Business and Industrial Service

From Gov. Charles S. Whitman of N. Y.

THE part that is being played by the women of this nation and of the nations of our Allies in helping to win the war is an inspiration to every patriotic citizen. Not only have our patriotic women entered the service of the Army and Navy, performed miracles of mercy in the nursing service and Red Cross work, and in many other lines of patriotic endeavor, but they have also entered the ranks of industry in vast numbers and have learned to perform the tasks of skilled workers and artisans. Many lines of work for which it formerly was thought women were unsuitable or not sufficiently skilful have now been opened up to women, and there are many tasks admirably adapted to the deftness, patience and skilful touch of women workers. The tremendous withdrawals of men from industry and from the farms have called for women to replace them in increasing numbers. This war is a war of organized industry and organized nations. To accomplish the great task of winning the war, it is necessary that supplies and munitions be made and transported to our armies in vast and increasing quantities. This task could not be done without the help of the great army of women workers, and it is only right and proper that we recognize the value of the service rendered by them.

At the same time, let me urge caution in the matter of substituting women for men in industry in order that we may do no injustice either to the women or to the nation itself. We must not forget, in the hurry of events, that the women are the home-keepers and mothers of the race. Their health and strength must be maintained at all hazards. Proper standards of working conditions, of hours of labor, wages, etc., must be maintained.

I believe firmly in the principle of equal pay for equal work. By that I do not mean that every woman worker should receive the same pay as a man doing a like job. But if the woman turns out the same amount of product with the same degree of skill she should unquestionably receive the same pay. Wages in such a situation should be determined by the ability of the women to do the work and to turn out the same product as the men. Most assuredly we should not permit the health of our women to be broken down by too hard work or permit them to work for such small wages as to compel them to work over-long hours and undergo wearing fatigue in order to make a decent living wage. We will be short-sighted indeed if we permit profiteering in women's work or allow the unscrupulous employer to make an exorbitant profit out of the patriotism and skill of the women who, from choice or necessity, are turning to industrial pursuits.

New York State has taken advanced ground in the matter of protection of women in industry. Its laws for the protection of women workers are perhaps the best of any state. Recently there has been created, with my approval, a special bureau in the State Industrial Commission known as the Bureau of Women in Industry, at the head of which is a woman who has made a lifetime study of the conditions of women workers. It is the function of this bureau to investigate particularly the conditions of women workers in factories and stores. New York State can be depended upon to take no backward step in such an important matter as the health, well-being and just treatment of its women workers.

Charles S. Whitman

From Gov. Edge of New Jersey

ONE of the greatest inspirations to the men of the land has been the women of the nation in canteen service, Red Cross work and Young Women's Christian Association work and other war activities. They have willingly given their beloved sons to their country. And now it seems that we must call upon them for still further service to take the place of hundreds of thousands of men who must shoulder the musket.

It is apparent that we must send at least three million more recruits to France. This will mean the withdrawal from the ordinary walk of life of about ten to fifteen millions of men to support these soldiers while in France. Women can fill many of their places. They can also take the places of hundreds of thousands of other men who, in turn, can take up the work of the boys who have gone. Clerical work and all light manufacturing can be done by the women. I believe the women of this land will follow the example of their sisters in France and England and other allied nations and give to their country the service of their hands as they have already given their warm and generous hearts and souls.

Walter Edge

From Gov. Sidney J. Catts of Florida

YOU ask me to write 150 words, stating why I think it is so necessary that women who have never worked before come forward now and release men for more important war work.

This is necessary in the first place because by releasing men we put more man power into the essential work of this Republic, into the army work of the United States and across the seas, which we all know will shorten the duration of the war. This, of course, is a very patriotic standpoint to view woman's work from, but I claim that every ounce of American, English or French manhood saved by the work of women shortens the war just that much; besides, it makes woman independent and puts her in a sphere where she can render true and noble service, not only during the war but after it shall terminate and victory perch upon our banner. There will be much constructive work to be done in this country, wherein the tender womanly touch and kind, intuitive sympathy of woman will be one of the most valuable assets. Aside from this, woman is demanding the ballot, and if she is going to vote and take the prerogatives and privileges of men she must stand in the forefront of our working brigades and working units, thus showing herself equal not only for the privileges and pleasures of citizenship, but for its hard work as well.

As Governor of the State of Florida, in order that no slackers be in my office I have discharged all men and the office work in the Governor's department is done entirely by four consecrated, noble young women, wholly willing and anxious to do their best for their country in this time of warfare, danger and trouble.

I appeal, in conclusion, to the noble-minded women of America, who are our mothers, wives and sisters, that they each and every one do their best in the different departments of work now open to them, that they may thus save the lives of those of our boys across the briny deep and bring them back to us once again in health and happiness.

Sidney J. Catts

From Gov. Arthur Capper of Kansas

VICTORY—and we know no other ending of the war—is now merely a question of man power. The enemy will collapse as soon as sufficient pressure is applied.

Let it then be done quickly. The sooner the victory is won, the more complete, the more glorious it will be.

The man-power needed in field and trench is going forward at a speed that has astonished the world. But for every soldier sent overseas a score of workers are needed in those industries that are essential to the support of our arms and the maintenance of our people and our allies. The need in the industries is so imperative that failure to meet it spells delay, disaster, defeat.

There is more work to do than there are men to do it; more jobs than men to fill them. Our only salvation is to call upon the heroic, patriotic women of America to do as their sisters in England and France are doing: turn to difficult tasks undreamed of a few short months ago, and take the places left vacant by the men who are fighting and dying for the world's freedom. The women of America hold in their hands the clock of Fate. They can name the hour of Victory.

Arthur Capper

From Gov. Cornwell of West Virginia

THE ever-increasing number of men being called into the military and naval service of the country presents a problem that can be solved in but one way. Every time a new draft on the man power is made for the army it increases the number of men needed in ammunition factories and in the shipyards, for the larger the army the more ships are needed to transport the men overseas and to carry the supplies and the more men are needed to manufacture the supplies.

The time is fast approaching, indeed, it is here now, when every able-bodied man must engage in some kind of war work—in an occupation or industry essential to a direct support of our fighting men.

The places of the millions of men who must go into war work can be supplied only by women. The failure of the women to take these places would invite economic, then military, disaster. It is not only the duty of the women in this crisis, a duty many are undertaking cheerfully and happily, but it is a great privilege, a great opportunity, which no patriotic woman will fail to accept if she is in a position to do so.

John Cornwell

From Gov. Frank O. Lowden of Illinois

EVEN before the war, women were taking a more and more important part in the work of the world. In many of the professions, and in other pursuits, they were already holding their own with the men, and winning conspicuous success. And now that the war has made heavy drafts upon the men engaged in essential industries, the employment of women has greatly increased. They are meeting their new obligations in a fine spirit, and with entire satisfaction. They have earned the right to have exactly the same rewards as men, when they render the same service. This is simply justice. Nor do I doubt for a moment that they will play as important a part in the work of reconstruction as they are playing now in the war.

We can look forward more confidently to the solution of the problems which peace will bring because of the training and discipline which the women of the world are getting in war time.

It has also been shown that a large participation in war activities by women has in no sense affected injuriously the home. In fact, the family has taken on a new worth, and a new dignity, just because of this participation. As the war proceeds, the problem for every patriotic woman of America is how much time she can spare from the home for work made necessary by the war. When she has answered this question, and has given all of the time she can to this work, she has a right to feel that she is helping equally with the men in the trenches to win the war.

Frank O. Lowden

From Gov. Frederick D. Gardner of Mo.

THERE exists no basis for the fear that the entrance into the industries of women will sap the unified strength of organized labor. If the fear still flourishes it will give way before the end of the war to warmest admiration and an irresistible desire to co-operate with courageous American women who have not hesitated to sacrifice their feminine predilections on the altar of "force to the utmost." In a short time labor will be organizing the women on a large scale. This will be a justifiable step, simply as a precaution against any attempt to take an unfair advantage of their labor to the detriment of industrial justice.

There will surely be continued demand and opportunity for women in many lines of industry. Their presence will neither menace the moral force of labor nor affect the standard of the wage if labor, as now instituted, recognizes them as a legitimate evolution, welcomes them into the fold, and takes steps to protect and encourage them in vocational employment. There was need of some such practical outlet for the energy and ingenuity of practical American women, faced with the necessity of earning a livelihood. Now that the need has been supplied, let us cultivate and develop the field in a manner calculated to add to the lustre of American labor and provide greater opportunity for the utilization of American capital.

Frederick D. Gardner

From Gov. J. A. A. Burnquist of Minn.

THAT America and the Allies will win the war even the most pessimistic will now admit, but we must continue our efforts to the utmost so that the day of victory will be hastened. Our danger now is that many patriotic citizens will be too optimistic so that they will relax their efforts and postpone the day of victory.

The War Department is calling men into the army as rapidly as it can train them and furnish needed supplies. At the same time a larger and larger number of men must be put to work making munitions, building ships and transporting supplies. All this time many of our everyday activities must go on. In many trades women have already to a large extent supplanted the men, but more are needed. Many women have already come forth, attracted by the increased wages. Others are so situated that high wages are no incentive. Here we must appeal to patriotic motives. With women as with men, it is essential that all lay aside such tasks as are unnecessary and such as can be postponed until after the war, and engage in such labor as will directly or indirectly aid in winning the war. Surely when the patriotic appeal is combined with the offer of good wages, the appeal will not be in vain.

J. A. A. Burnquist

From Gov. Simon Bamberger of Utah

THE success of our army on the battlefield is measured in the support accorded by the army at home. The victory to be won at home includes production and conservation to the utmost that our army in the field may be munitioned and fed and that the civil population of our Allies may be provided with foodstuffs.

Prior to the war the vast majority of the members of our field army were engaged in productive occupations. It is now the battle of the home army not only to maintain pre-war production but to augment it and to conserve to an extreme degree. There seems but one answer—the conservation of man power to the utmost. To accomplish this result women must engage in productive occupations. Some already have and thousands are engaged in work of mercy. Others must take the places of men now in the field army and of men called to heavier duties.

If the great victory now in sight is to be won the womanhood of America must realize the duty imposed upon it and not falter. I am confident that its most honored traditions will be maintained. Slackers among women will be countenanced no more than slackers among men.

Simon Bamberger

From Gov. Emanuel Philipp of Wis.

SO far as women of Wisconsin are concerned, it has not been found necessary to stimulate them. They have come forward from all walks of life with a readiness and enthusiasm that is inspiring. Back of this, it seems to me, is the fact that women are finding themselves. The war has engendered a spirit of earnest responsibility which reaches to every home; and not only the necessity of substituting for the men who are called, but the feeling that it is a solemn privilege as well as a duty to do what lies in their power to preserve the liberties of free peoples, is impelling them.

All this tends to dignify labor. So firmly has this sense of individual responsibility for the preservation of free government taken hold of the people that I believe a generation at least will have passed before we shall have lost the feeling in this country that a leisure class, whether of men or women, is an anomaly in a genuine democracy.

Emanuel Philipp

From Gov. E. C. Harrington of Md.

IN reply to your letter of September 27th, I will say that in my opinion there is an absolute necessity in our country for women who are in a position to do so to come forward and engage in manual labor of the kind which they have not heretofore engaged in so that men might be released for more important war work, and I know that they are doing so in large numbers with us. Some of them may be doing it because of the higher pay which is now offered, but a greater number of them are doing it as a real patriotic duty, and they are doing this work very efficiently. With the increased amount of work to be done, and with the shortage of man labor necessarily occasioned by the war, it becomes an absolute necessity for women to come to the country's aid at this time. I have great confidence that they will do so.

E. C. Harrington

From Gov. Brumbaugh of Penn.

BACK of our growing army—as it moves heroically forward—must be an industrial army whose activities must not lessen. They must increase. As the men take up arms, the women must take up hammers, and in this way keep the resources available for the war absolutely at a maximum. It is surprising to the unreflecting to note how many useful services women can perform, and it is incumbent upon them to work with a will gladly for the Republic. They have already in so many ways shown their loyalty and capacity that it is only reasonable to expect that as soon as the need is made known to our splendid women they will meet it in a glorious way.

Wm. Brumbaugh

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The Above Letters Were Addressed to Mr. A. Seixas of The New York Tribune.